

lation of this region can be called by either of the names now in current use. We are left with a situation in which *sikkimensis* remains the name of the eastern race. The adherents to strict priority may choose to place into use for the western populations a name which has never been adopted (see below) and was based, as seems most probable, on a specimen collected in the north-western Himalayas and in this case a substitution is necessary only in the name of the author and date of *himalayensis* from Jerdon, 1863, to Bonaparte, 1856.

However, while acceptance of this would not involve the extensive confusion inherent in Deignan's proposals, even this minor change seems unnecessary as it is contrary to the Conservation Principle adopted by the Fourteenth International Congress of Zoology at Copenhagen in 1953 (articles 27-29 and appendix 2 of the Decisions) because *himalayensis* of Jerdon was proposed independently as a new species and *himalayensis* Bonaparte had been completely overlooked in the literature prior to Deignan's proposals. *R. himalayensis* of Bonaparte is not quoted in any standard work on the region such as Jerdon's "Birds of India" (1863, vol. 2), the "Fauna of British India" in its first edition by Oates (1889, vol. 1) or its second one by Stuart Baker (1924, vol. 2, and 1930, vols. 7 and 8), Hartert's "Vögel die paläarktischen Fauna" (1907, and supplements), or in David and Oustalet "Oiseaux de la Chine" (1877), or in any general world list such as the "Catalogue of Birds" (cited) and Sharpe's "Hand-list" (1903, vol. 4). Further, an earlier opinion of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature (Opinion 107, see 1929, Smithsonian Misc. Coll. vol. 73 (6), p. 9; or, 1931, Report Eleventh Internatl. Congr. Zool., Padova, 1930, p. 87) had already stated that "a name in current use is not to be supplemented by an earlier but rarely adopted or an unadopted name unless the argument is unambiguous and unless the premises are *not subject to difference of opinion*", (*italics mine*).

We can thus reject *himalayensis* Bonaparte altogether and the nomenclature of the Himalayan races of *Regulus regulus* therefore remains as in the standard literature: *himalayensis* Jerdon, 1863, for the birds of the western Himalayas, and *sikkimensis* R. and A. Meinertzhagen, 1926, for the birds of the eastern Himalayas.

I am indebted and would like to express my gratitude to several of my colleagues for their cordial co-operation: to Mr. J. D. Macdonald and Sir Norman Kinnear for their comments and to Mr. Macdonald for the loan of Gould's specimen and other specimens from the British Museum, to Dr. A. L. Rand for the loan of specimens from the Chicago Museum of Natural History, and to Drs. E. Mayr and Amadon for their advice and reading the manuscript.

## **New Forms of Pipit, Longclaw, Robin-Chat, Grass-Warbler, Sunbird, Quail-Finch and Canary from Central Africa**

by MR. C. W. BENSON

*Received 20th September, 1955 and exhibited at the September meeting of the B.O.C.*

In describing these new forms, I have had every facility while working in the National Museum of Southern Rhodesia, Bulawayo, from the

Director, Mr. R. H. N. Smithers, and Miss Mary Paterson; and subsequently in the British Museum, from Mr. J. D. Macdonald and his staff. I must also thank Captain C. H. B. Grant for much valuable advice.

a. *Anthus caffer mzimbaensis*, new race.

*Description:* Differs from *Anthus caffer caffer* Sundevall in being purer white on the abdomen, without any buffy tinge; wing and tail measurements larger.

*Distribution:* Only known from Edingeni, Mzimba district, Nyasaland.

*Type:* Adult ♂. Edingeni, Mzimba district, Nyasaland: 12° 03' S., 33° 17' E. 30th September, 1940. Collected by C. W. Benson. In the Transvaal Museum. T.M. Reg. No. 23910.

*Measurements of Type:* Wing 77, tail 57.5, culmen (from base) 14, tarsus 19 mm.

*Remarks:* Only known from the type specimen, and originally attributed ("Ibis", 1942, p. 304) to *A. c. caffer*. The skull was fully ossified, and testes slightly enlarged.

This specimen has been compared with twenty-six from South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, in the British, Bulawayo and Transvaal Museums: wing 70–77, average 73.1; tail 47–55, average 50.9 mm. In the colouring of the abdomen, the Nyasaland specimen is at once distinguishable.

The foregoing is the only record of *Anthus caffer* from Nyasaland. In Northern Rhodesia it is only known from two females collected by me in the Mpika district at 11° 06' S., 31° 08' E., on 22nd January and 8th March. They are similar in colour and measurements to *A. c. caffer*: wing 71, 71.5; tail 50, 52 mm. These two and the Nyasaland specimen were collected in *Brachystegia* woodland. No peculiarity of habitat was noticed, and it is difficult to account for the extreme local rarity of the species. It may appear surprising that the Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland birds are distinct, but it should be remembered that they are separated by the Luangwa Rift.

I have been able to examine only two specimens of *A. c. blayneyi* van Someren, in the British Museum, both from northern Tanganyika Territory. One of these, from Loliondo, has the abdomen a pure white as in *A. c. mzimbaensis*. The other, from Ngopan hill, S.E. Masai district, is more buffy. They measure respectively, wing 66, 71; tail 44, 45 mm. Van Someren, Bull. B.O.C., 40, 1919, p. 56, gives wing 65–70 mm. for ten specimens of *A. c. blayneyi*, which must therefore be separable from *A. c. mzimbaensis* on measurements, if not on colour.

I have to thank Dr. G. Rudebeck for the loan of specimens in the Transvaal Museum.

b. *Macronyx grimwoodi*, new species.

*Description:* Differs from *M. a. ameliae* (Sundevall) and *M. a. wintoni* Sharpe by its longer culmen and tarsus; streaking on chest finer, and in a wider zone, extending further down towards the abdomen; red confined to the throat, and very pale; upperside tending to be generally darker, with margins of feathers more richly tawny.

*Distribution:* Only known from the Chitunta Plain, Mwinilunga district, Northern Rhodesia.

*Type:* ♂, skull fully ossified. Chitunta Plain, Mwinilunga district, Northern Rhodesia, 22nd July, 1954. Collected by Major I. R. Grimwood.

Collector's No. 893. In the National Museum, Bulawayo, Southern Rhodesia. N.M. Reg. No. 17565.

*Measurements of Type:* Wing 97, tail 69, culmen from base 21, tarsus 37 mm.

*Remarks:* Particulars of four other specimens collected by Major Grimwood, all with skull fully ossified, are as follows:

Sex	Date	Wing	Tail	Culmen from base	Tarsus
♂	27.7.51	92	66	22	38 mm.
♀	27.7.51	97	71	21	40 "
?	22.7.54	93	69	20	38 "
♂	27.7.51	94	70	22	38 "

I have measured all the specimens of *M. a. ameliae* and *M. a. wintoni* in the British and Bulawayo Museums, and due to the kindness of Professor H. Schouteden and Dr. J. M. Winterbottom several specimens from the Congo and South African Museums, respectively, have also been available. Assuming *M. a. ameliae* as confined to Natal and Zululand, the figures (in mm.) are as follows (in all cases culmen measurements are from base of skull):

*M. a. ameliae.*

3 ♂. Wing 94, 94, 95. Tail 73, 75, 82. Culmen 19. Tarsus 31, 32, 32.5.

1 ♀. Wing 88. Tail 72. Culmen 19. Tarsus 31.5.

4 unsexed. Wing 87, 93, 94, 96.5. Tail 72, 76, 77, 80. Culmen 18, 19 (three). Tarsus 31.5, 32, 33, 34.

*M. a. wintoni.*

38 ♂. Wing 86–95, av. 90.7. Tail 65–77, av. 70.1. Culmen 15.5–19, av. 17.0. Tarsus 28–33, av. 30.5.

19 ♀. Wing 82–91, av. 86.5. Tail 62–73, av. 67.7. Culmen 15–17.5, av. 16.5. Tarsus 29–33, av. 30.2.

Specimens from as close to the Mwinilunga district as Balovale, to the southward, and Kanzenze, to the northward (see gazetteer of localities, Chapin, Bds. Belg. Congo, 4, 1954) show no approach to *M. grimwoodi*, which seems best regarded as a distinct species, even although it is not known to occur alongside *M. ameliae*.

White, 'Ibis', 1946, p. 78, has discussed the plumage stages in *M. ameliae*. To this I would add that the black on the chest seems only to coalesce into a black patch in adult males, but not in adult females, in which the chest is never more than streaked (and likewise apparently in both sexes of *M. grimwoodi*).

Whether *M. a. wintoni* is worth recognising is largely a matter of opinion. The measurements given above suggest that there is a tendency to relatively large size in Natal and Zululand, but with some overlap. It is perhaps best to recognise *M. a. wintoni*, but to restrict it to northern Tanganyika Territory and Kenya. Six specimens from this area in the British Museum are rather paler above than material as a whole from elsewhere, and see also Chapin, Bds. Belg. Congo, 3, 1953, p. 85. Incidentally, reference White, *op. cit.*, two of these northern males have a well developed coallescent black patch on the chest.

In the Northern Province of Northern Rhodesia, I have found *M. ameliae* of general distribution in moist short-grassed dambos. A young bird only just fledged was collected at Abercorn with its parents on 2nd July. A male in breeding condition was collected in southern Bangweulu on 8th February.

I am indebted to Mr. Smithers for drawing my attention to the specimens of *M. grimwoodi* and for placing them at my disposal for description. One of them has been presented to the British Museum.

c. *Cossypha bocagei chapini*, new race.

*Description:* Differs from *C. b. bocagei* Finsch & Hartlaub in the olive of the mantle, back and wing-coverts lacking any marked rufous tinge; rufous of underside rather paler.

*Distribution:* From Mwinilunga, north-western Northern Rhodesia, east through Ndola and the Upper Katanga, to Danger Hill, Kasama and Abercorn, in north-eastern Northern Rhodesia.

*Type:* Adult ♂. Mporokoso, Northern Rhodesia: 9° 22' S., 30° 03' E. 30th July 1953. Collected by C. W. Benson. Collector's No. NR 1703. In the British Museum. B.M. Reg. No. 1955. 41. 2.

*Measurements of Type:* Wing 81, tail 63, culmen (from base) 17, tarsus 26 mm.

*Remarks:* Named after Dr. James P. Chapin, who in his "Birds of the Belgian Congo", vol. 3, 1953, p. 520, draws attention to the difference in the colour of the underside between specimens from Angola and Mwinilunga. It is, however, in the colour of the upperside that there is the most marked difference.

Due to the kindness of Dr. Dean Amadon and Mr. E. T. Gilliard, I have had the loan of four specimens of *C. b. bocagei* in the American Museum of Natural History from Mombola and Mucuío, in western Angola, and also of one of *C. b. chapini* from Mwinilunga. I have also had available twenty-one specimens of *C. b. chapini* in the British and Bulawayo Museum. I do not consider that the difference on the upperside can be due to "foxing". Three of the Angola birds were collected in 1904, the fourth in 1925. One of the 1904 birds is rather less rufous than the other two and the 1925 bird. Of the series of *C. b. chapini*, fifteen were collected in 1953-5, one in 1944, five in 1905-8, and one about 1899. One of the 1905-8 birds, from Ndola, is very like the less rufous individual of the 1904 Angola three, but all the remaining twenty-one are quite distinctly purer olive.

Specimens of *C. b. chapini* personally sexed by me measure as follows:—six ♂, wing 79-84, tail 61-65 mm.; four ♀, wing 74-77, tail 55-59 mm. Four others, sexed as ♂, have wing 80-84, tail 59-66 mm.; likewise four ♀, wing 74-77, tail 54-58 mm. Three sexed as ♀, but probably ♂, have wing 83-84, tail 65-67 mm. An unsexed specimen, probably a ♀, has wing 75, tail 56 mm. Three ♂ of *C. b. bocagei* have wing 81-83, tail 65-69 mm. A specimen sexed as a ♀, but probably a ♂, has wing 83, tail 69 mm.

*Cossypha bocagei* cannot be conspecific with *C. polioptera*, as *C. b. chapini* presumably must overlap with *C. p. grimwoodi* White, described from the Mwinilunga district, and quite distinct. But its relationship to *C. insulana kungwensis* Moreau needs further investigation. Although there are marked differences, they may not be more than racial.

A ♂ collected near Kawambwa on 2nd September had testes much enlarged. A ♂ from near Abercorn on 24th November also showed some gonad activity. A specimen collected by Major W. E. Poles at Danger Hill on 7th January is still in a partially spotted juvenile dress. A. W. Vincent, "Ibis", 1947, p. 199, took eggs at Elisabethville on 23rd November. Like White, "Ibis", 1946, p. 91, I find that this robin-chat lives on or near the



floor of evergreen forest. I have not heard the song, which seems to be too high pitched for my ear. But a few minutes after hearing it on one occasion, my collector Jali Makawa described it as a series of four subdued syllables, the first and last of lower pitch than the second and third, and the last more prolonged than the first three. It reminded him somewhat of that of *Bessonornis macclouniei*, see Benson, Ann. Trans. Mus., 21(2), 1949, p. 170. It is apparently only normally heard in September—November.

P.S. For notes on a series collected by Verheyen, see his "Exploration du Parc National de L'Upemba", 1953, p. 497. I have seen this series, but it has not been practicable for me to compare them with the specimens recorded above. Some of them seem to show an inclination towards *C. b. bocagei*. Eighteen of the twenty-two specimens of *C. b. chapini* referred to above, however, are from east of the Luapula River. One collected on 18th March in the Upemba series is still in a complete juvenile spotted dress.

d. *Cisticola fulvicapilla hallae*, new race.

*Description:* In non-breeding dress, closest to *C. f. muelleri* Alexander, but with the crown paler; mantle paler and slightly greyer; underparts whiter, less tinged buff. Differs from *C. r. ruficapilla* (Smith) in having the mantle less rufous, therefore contrasting with the crown. No specimens of *C. f. dispar* Sousa in this dress are available for comparison, but from Lynes' description ("Ibis", 1930, suppl., p. 515), evidently altogether paler, less rich on the crown and mantle.

In breeding dress, slightly paler than *C. f. muelleri* above and below. Considerably paler on the crown and mantle than *C. f. dispar*. Slightly greyer on the mantle than *C. f. ruficapilla*, with the rufous of the crown more clearly divided from the mantle.

*Distribution:* North-eastern Bechuanaland north of 18° 40' S. (Tsotsoroghe Pan and Panda Matenga): Barotseland south of 16° S. (Sesheke, Mashi, Shangombo and Nangweshi): Damaraland (Elephant Vlei): southern Angola (Luvando, approx. 14° 30' S., 14° 30' E.).

*Type:* ♀. in non-breeding dress. Tsotsoroghe Pan, north-eastern Bechuanaland. 26th June, 1930. Collected by the Vernay-Lang Kalahari Expedition. In the British Museum. B.M. Reg. No. 1932. 5.5.84.

*Measurements of Type:* Wing 45, tail 40, culmen from base 12 mm.

*Remarks:* This new race is named after Mrs. B. P. Hall, of the Bird Room staff in the British Museum. Four specimens in breeding dress, in the British Museum, from Luvando and Panda Matenga, examined; sixteen in non-breeding dress, in the British and Bulawayo Museums, from all localities except Luvando. Measurements: ♂, wing 46–52, tail 38–46 mm.; ♀, wing 44–49, tail 36–40 mm.

Specimens recently presented to the British Museum by Mr. C. M. N. White, which he asked me to examine, from Balovale, the Kabompo River and Mwinilunga, Northern Rhodesia, are close to *C. f. muelleri*. I have also examined specimens confirming the localities for that race given by White and Winterbottom in their Northern Rhodesia checklist, 1949, p. 102. Although I have not seen any intermediates, I believe that White and Winterbottom are correct in regarding *C. f. angusticauda* (Reichenow) as conspecific with *C. fulvicapilla*. My collector Jali Makawa tells me that the song-call of *C. f. angusticauda* is like that of *C. f. muelleri* in Nyasaland;

and see Chapin, Bds. Belg. Congo, 3, 1953, p. 379. We have collected specimens of *C. f. angusticauda*, now in the Bulawayo Museum, at Chembe (11° 58' S., 28° 40' E), Mporokoso, Kasama and in the Mpika district at 11° 22' S., 30° 39' E., and 12° 14' S., 30° 51' E. But specimens from that district at 11° 15' S., 32° 05' E., and 12° 05' S, 31° 43' E., are *C. f. muelleri*.

Mrs. B. P. Hall, in a paper on a collection made by her at Panda Matenga (awaiting publication), has indicated that certain of the material of *C. fulvicapilla* examined by her might represent a new race, but thought it inadvisable to give it a name without seeing further specimens. That this has been possible is due to Mr. Smithers, who has very kindly made available the material collected by him in southern Barotseland. I am much indebted to Mrs. Hall for a great deal of assistance in the preparation of this note. It is only in deference to her wishes that this new race is formally described by me, rather than by her.

*e. Cinnyris oustaleti rhodesiae*, new race.

*Description:* Differs from *Cinnyris oustaleti oustaleti* (Bocage), of western Angola, by its longer bill; wing and tail measurements also rather smaller.

*Distribution:* Kasama, Mporokoso, Abercorn and Mwenzo, north-eastern Northern Rhodesia.

*Type:* Adult ♂. Kasama, Northern Rhodesia. 23rd March, 1954. Collected by C. W. Benson. Collector's No. N.R. 2998. In the British Museum. Brit. Mus. Reg. No. 1955. 38.3.

*Measurements of Type:* Wing 56, tail 36, culmen (exposed) 17, tarsus 16 mm.

*Remarks:* Measurements of the material in the British Museum (all adult ♂) are as follows:—

*C. o. oustaleti.*

Caconda and Huambo in Angola: four specimens. Culmen (exposed) 19, 19, 20, 20 mm.; wing 55–57, average 56.1 mm.; tail 36. 5–39, average 37.9 mm.

*C. o. rhodesiae.*

Northern Rhodesia: four specimens, including the type. Culmen (exposed) 17, 17, 17, 17.5 mm.; wing 52.5–56 mm.; tail 33.5–36 mm. In addition, seven adult ♂ in the Coryndon Museum, Nairobi:—culmen (exposed) 16.5 (two), 17 (three), 17.5, 18 mm.; wing 52–56.5 mm.; tail 34–36 mm. Summary of eleven specimens in all:—culmen (exposed) 16.5–18, average 17.1 mm.; wing 52–56.5, average 54.6 mm.; tail 33.5–36, average 35.0 mm.

I am indebted to Mr. J. G. Williams for very kindly sending me the measurements of the adult ♂ in the Coryndon Museum. His paper in "Ibis", 1955, pp. 150–153, contains much further information about *C. oustaleti* in Northern Rhodesia.

*f. Ortygospiza atricollis smithersi*, new race.

*Description:* Similar to *O. a. polyzona* (Temminck), *O. a. minuscula* White and *O. a. muelleri* Zedlitz, but at once distinguishable by the much darker upperside. Also, less constant, chestnut on underside tending to be richer, and barring on chest to be finer.

*Distribution:* South and east of Lake Bangweulu; Mweru Marsh at

8° 32' S., 30° 07' E.; Lake Kako, 8° 40' S., 30° 15' E.; Abercorn (all localities in north-eastern Northern Rhodesia). Flood plains.

*Type*: ♂. Mpasa, Bangweulu, 11° 00' S., 30° 30' E., Northern Rhodesia, 19th August 1953. Collected by C. W. Benson. Collector's No. NR 1806. In the British Museum. B.M. Reg. No. 1955.41.1.

*Measurements of Type*: Wing 52, tail 29, culmen from base 9 mm.

*Remarks*: Named after Mr. R. H. N. Smithers. Fourteen ♂ of *O. a. smithersi* have wing 50–55, average 52.8 mm.; fourteen ♀ 52–56, average 53.9 mm. Thirteen ♂ of *O. a. polyzona* in the British Museum, from the Transvaal southwards, have wing 52–56, average 54.7 mm.; likewise fourteen ♀ wing 53.5–57, average 54.9 mm. In all, I have examined fifty-two specimens of *O. a. polyzona*, two of *O. a. minuscula* and seventeen of *O. a. muelleri*. The nearest locality to *O. a. smithersi* from which *O. a. polyzona* is represented is Namwala, southern Northern Rhodesia, and *O. a. muelleri* from Karonga, northern Nyasaland. *O. a. minuscula* is only certainly known from the Balovale district, on the upper Zambesi. Mr. C. M. N. White has suggested that specimens may fade in the course of time. If so, *O. a. smithersi* might merely be based on fresh specimens, all of which have been collected since July 1953. The material of the other three races was all collected earlier, much of it considerably so. But I feel that the difference is too marked to be explicable on this basis, and is in fact attributable to proximity to the still darker *O. a. fuscata* Slater. Furthermore, fresh specimens of that form collected by me are not appreciably darker above than specimens collected over twenty years ago.

Indeed, the relationship of *O. a. smithersi* to *O. a. fuscata* is a much more interesting problem than its relationship to the other three races. I have examined material of *O. a. fuscata* from the Kwango district, Luluabourg and Kayoyo in the southern Belgian Congo, and from Kawambwa, Fort Rosebery, Mporokoro, Kasama and Abercorn in north-eastern Northern Rhodesia, as follows:—nineteen ♂, wing 52–55, average 52.8 mm., nine ♀, wing 50–55, average 52.9 mm. Thus in wing length there is no appreciable difference from *O. a. smithersi*. But colour differences are readily apparent. *O. a. fuscata* lacks any white on the chin and around the eye, is on the whole richer in colour, and the barring on the chest tends to be finer. Also, in adult ♂ the bill is wholly red whereas in *O. a. smithersi* the upper mandible is mainly sepia. If the localities already cited for the two forms are plotted on a map it is evident that there is some geographical overlap, and one might be inclined to regard them as distinct species. Moreover, both were collected at Abercorn. In this locality three specimens of *O. a. fuscata* were from a permanently moist 'sponge' dambo, and two of *O. a. smithersi* from a flood-plain drying up after the end of the rains. At Kasama, where there are only 'sponge' dambos, four specimens of *O. a. fuscata* were collected, and one of *O. a. smithersi*. Apart from this, all the specimens of *O. a. fuscata* are from dambos and all of *O. a. smithersi* from flood-plains.

Until more is known about the relationship, in north-eastern Northern Rhodesia and elsewhere, of the forms with white on the chin and around the eye to those lacking these characters, I think it is better to regard them as conspecific. But it follows that in the area in which I have been collecting the two races must be regarded as ecological to some extent rather than geographical. Chapin, Bds. Belg. Congo, 4, 1954, p. 500, evidently found a

rather similar state of affairs in the Bogoro / Kasenyi area. The two forms were identical in behaviour. Neither does my own experience suggest any difference. Chapin's account, *op. cit.*, of the species as a whole, is essential to any further study of this problem. One factor which may militate against recognising a second species is that *O. a. ugandae* van Someren is said to be of intermediate pattern with very little white on the chin and around the eye.

Finally, I suggest that the explanation of a dark-backed race (*O. a. smithersi*) interposed between paler-backed races (*O. a. polyzona* and *O. a. muelleri*) may be the presence of *O. a. fuscata* in the same geographic area, from which *O. a. smithersi* is probably not completely segregated.

I have to thank Dr. A. J. Cain for the loan of the two specimens of *O. a. minuscula*, in the Oxford University Museum.

*P.S.* I have had the loan of a further two specimens of *O. a. minuscula*, from the American Museum of Natural History, making in all two ♂ and two ♀ available. Comparing them with the series of *O. a. polyzona* in the British Museum, I find it difficult to appreciate the colour differences given, see 'Ibis', 1946: 218. *O. a. minuscula* seems very close to *O. a. polyzona*. Possibly with a longer series *O. a. minuscula* might appear whiter on the abdomen. But one specimen has very little white, and a number of the specimens of *O. a. polyzona* have it quite well marked. There is also considerable variation in this respect in the series of *O. a. smithersi*, but in *O. a. fuscata* the white is practically absent.

It is also worth mentioning that an occupied nest with five eggs of *O. a. smithersi* was seen in southern Bangweulu on 9th February.

*g. Serinus atrogularis kasamaensis*, new race.

*Description:* Differs from *Serinus atrogularis lwenarum* White in having much less tawny on the chest and flanks; slightly darker on upperside.

*Distribution:* Only so far known from Kasama, north-eastern Northern Rhodesia.

*Type:* Adult ♂. Kasama. 2nd September 1953. Collected by C. W. Benson. Collector's No. NR 1919. In the British Museum. Brit. Mus. Reg. No. 1955. 42. 1.

*Measurements of Type:* Wing 74, tail 45, culmen from base 9 mm.

*Remarks:* Six further specimens collected: three ♂, wing 73–77 mm.; two ♀, wing 72–73 mm.; one unsexed, wing 71 mm. This series has been compared in the British Museum with three specimens of *S. a. lwenarum* from the Balovale district, and two from the Katanga (Biano Plateau and Upper Lualaba). Single specimens from near Mporokoso, north-eastern Bangweulu and the Lukanga Swamp also resemble *S. a. lwenarum*; likewise three from Mongu and Mankoya. Another from Mongu is paler, more greyish above and less tawny below, resembling specimens from further south in Barotseland. Three from the Sesheke district, and one from near the Khazuma Pan in north-eastern Bechuanaland at 18° 25' S., 25° 30' E., show these characters very markedly. Three from the Senanga district are rather similar, though with some tendency towards *S. a. lwenarum*, being rather darker above and more tawny below. These seven specimens have been compared with three topotypes of *S. a. fitzsimonsi* Roberts, Ann. Trans. Mus., 16(1), 1935, p. 183, which are darker, more brownish on the



upperside. Unfortunately no material has been available of *S. a. semi-deserti* Roberts *op. cit.*, but it is possible that they are that race.

## A Note on *Pirenestes* Swainson, and Description of a New Species

by MR. C. W. BENSON

*Received 20th September, 1955 and exhibited at the September meeting of the B.O.C.*

Mr. D. Vesey-FitzGerald, and I have recently collected in Northern Rhodesia the following specimens of *Pirenestes*:—

a. Adults, skull fully ossified, with red on head.

Sex	Date	Locality	Wing (mm.)	Width of lower mandible at base (mm.)
♂	31.5.54	Kasama	74.5	18.5
♂	28.1.55	"	71	17
♀	28.1.55	"	71	17

b. Immature, skull ossification only 40–50% complete, no red on head.

Sex	Date	Locality	Wing (mm.)	Width of lower mandible at base (mm.)
♀	1.6.54	Kasama	71	17
♀	4.6.54	"	69	17
♀	11.6.54	Mpika district at 12° 05' S., 31° 40' E.	70	17

The Kasama birds were collected near the floor of a patch of dense evergreen forest, about 100 yards wide, bordering a small perennial stream. The Mpika bird was from a thin fringe of evergreen scrub, along a non-perennial stream. But the predominant vegetation in both these areas is *Brachystegia* woodland. The first collected adult had seeds similar to those of finger millet in its stomach; the other two, seeds similar to those of kaffir corn, also a few insect legs and fragments of shells (identifications by Provincial Agricultural Officer, Kasama.)

According to measurements already published, the adults agree best with *P. ostrimus maximus* Chapin, and are similar in colour. There can be no doubt that the immature birds belong to the same form. They are similar in colour to the adult ♀, but without any red on the head, and the red in the tail and upper tail-coverts is dull orange-red rather than crimson.

Due to the kindness of Professor E. Stresemann, I have had the loan from the Berlin Museum of the type specimen of *P. frommi* Kothe, collected only some 100 miles north of Kasama. It is sexed as a ♂; wing 70, width of lower mandible at base 16 mm. It appears to be still younger than any of the Northern Rhodesian birds. The bill, instead of being blackish slate, is sepia, with pale ochraceous at the base of the lower mandible. In plumage the only difference is that it is more chocolate, less greyish on the abdomen. Being a younger bird it is in fresher plumage, and the difference seems due merely to wear.

There can be no doubt that the type of *P. frommi* and the Northern Rhodesian material belong to the same form. They should be known as